U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Texas Historical Commission
(b) (6)
State Historic Preservation Officer
1511 Colorado
Austin, TX 78701

Dear (b) (6)

U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) is writing once again to solicit your input concerning the proposed construction of border barriers in the United States Border Patrol (USBP) Rio Grande Valley Sector. This letter follows-up on an initial scoping letter that was sent in March 2018. As part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18), Congress specifically appropriated funds for the construction of border barriers in the USBP Rio Grande Valley Sector. With the funding that has been provided by Congress, CBP is proposing: (1) to design and construct approximately 25 miles of levee fencing in Hidalgo County, Texas within the USBP Rio Grande Valley Sector (b) (7)(E) Stations area of responsibility (AOR); and (2) to design and construct approximately eight (8) miles of bollard wall in Starr County, Texas within the USBP Rio Grande Valley Sector, (b) (7)(E) Station AOR. CBP would like your input on the proposed construction.

The purpose of the proposed barrier construction is to increase CBP's ability to impede or deny illegal border crossings and to provide improved surveillance and detection capabilities to the areas of greatest risk of illegal cross-border activity located within the USBP Rio Grande Valley Sector. The Rio Grande Valley Sector continues to lead the nation in apprehensions of illegal immigrants and accounted for 45% of all apprehensions along the southwest border last year. Approximately 85% of all Rio Grande Valley Sector apprehensions come from the Western Corridor. The project will be similar to other existing levee and border wall systems located within the Rio Grande Valley Sector.

Enclosed you will find maps showing the proposed locations for levee wall and bollard wall in Hidalgo and Starr Counties. The approximate mileage for each USBP AOR within the Rio Grande Valley Sector is as follows:

- (b) (7)(E) OR – Approximately 14 miles (Hidalgo County)
- AOR – Approximately 11 miles (Hidalgo County)
- AOR – Approximately 8 miles (Starr County)

Regarding the approximately 25 miles of levee wall in Hidalgo County, the proposed alignment would be situated on the south face of the northern U.S. International Boundary Water Commission (IBWC) levee. The proposed design includes a reinforced concrete levee wall to the

approximate height of the existing levee, with 18-foot tall steel bollards installed on the top of the levee wall. The project would also include a 150-foot enforcement zone on the south/river side of the levee wall, detection and surveillance technology that would be incorporated into the levee wall, (b) (7)(E) vehicle gates, pedestrian gates, and an all-weather patrol road that would run parallel to the levee wall, and enforcement zone lighting.

Regarding the approximately 8 miles of bollard wall in Starr County, proposed design includes 20 to 30-foot tall steel bollards, detection and surveillance technology (b) (7)(E) (b) (7)(E), pedestrian gates, and an all-weather patrol road parallel to the bollard wall. It could also include a 150-foot enforcement zone on the south/river side of the bollard wall and enforcement zone lighting.

Additional details of the possible components of the projects are as follows:

- **Levee Wall -**The levee wall would be a concrete wall to the approximate height of the levee crest with 18- foot tall bollards installed in the top of the levee wall.
- **Bollard Wall –** The bollard wall would be 20 to 30 feet high utilizing (b) (7)(E) steel bollards.
- **150 Foot Enforcement Zone –** The enforcement zone would be an area extending from the south/river side of the levee wall or bollard wall approximately 150 feet. All vegetation within the 150-foot enforcement zone will be cleared.
- **Gates -** (b) (7)(E) vehicle gates would be installed with a minimum height of 18 feet and minimum width of 20 feet. In addition, gates designed to allow for farming equipment would be installed where appropriate and range in width from 40 to 50 feet. All gates will be (b) (7)(E) gates with an (b) (7)(E).
- **Lighting -** LED lighting would be installed as part of this project. CBP would work with the appropriate stakeholders to develop solutions to avoid excess lighting beyond the enforcement zone.
- **All Weather Road -** An all-weather aggregate patrol road (type FC-2) would be constructed on the south side and parallel to the levee or bollard wall and within the 150-foot enforcement zone. The specific location of the road within the enforcement zone would be determined during the design phase of the project.
- **Cameras -** A camera surveillance system would be installed to monitor the wall, the enforcement zone, and southern approach.

CBP is in the process of obtaining rights of entry for survey to identify land requirements, appraising the acreage that would be required for the proposed construction, and gathering input from landowners. CBP will also conduct environmental and design related survey and site assessment activities.

CBP will evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the levee wall and steel bollard wall construction. In addition to the survey and site assessments, CBP is gathering data and input from state and local government agencies, federal agencies, Native American Tribes and landowners that may be affected by or otherwise have an interest in the proposed construction. Because your agency or organization is likely to have knowledge and expertise regarding the potential environmental impacts, your input is sought regarding the likely or anticipated effects to

biological, cultural, and natural resources from the proposed construction. Your response should include any state and local restrictions, permitting or other requirements with which CBP should consider during project siting, construction, and operation.

Comments sought by CBP include specific input regarding the proposed construction, information that could be pertinent to CBP's analysis of potential environmental effects, and identification of significant issues. Comments received in response to this letter, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be part of the public record for this action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the agency with the ability to provide the respondent with subsequent environmental documents.

CBP is committed to providing additional opportunities for public comment for these projects and will prepare appropriate environmental planning documents to evaluate potential environmental impacts from the implementation of the planned projects. Your prompt attention to this request is appreciated. Comments and information will be accepted up to 30 days following the date of this letter.

If you have any questions or comments please contact me at commentsenv@cbp.dhs.gov. Please include "RGV Wall Construction" in the title of your email. You may also submit comments, questions, or concerns to the following address:

U.S. Customs and Border Protection
U.S. Border Patrol Headquarters
Program Management Office Directorate Wall Portfolio
1300 Pennsylvania Ave. 6.5E Mail Stop 1039
Washington, DC 20229-1100

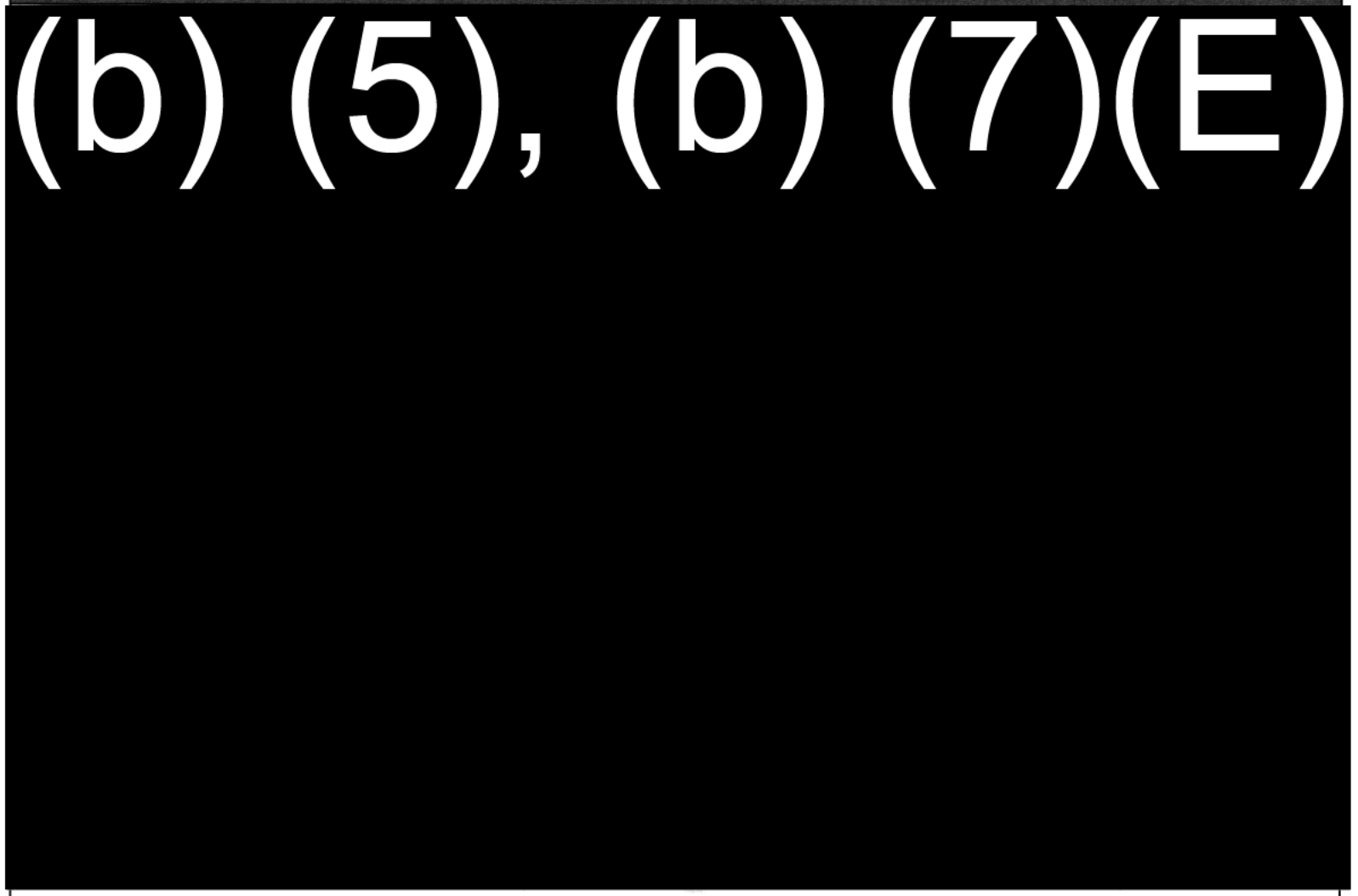
Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

(b)(6);(b)(7)(C)

(b)(6);(b)(7)(C)
Real Estate and Environmental Branch Chief
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
United States Border Patrol
Border Wall Program Management Office
Program Management Office Directorate

Proposed Barrier Hidalgo County



LEGEND

Proposed Barrier FY18 Projects

FY18 RGV (b) (7)(E)

FY18 RGV

FY18 RGV

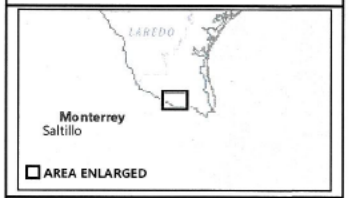
Existing Pedestrian Fence

Primary

**If sheet measures less than 11x17" it is a reduced print. Reduce scale accordingly.*

1 in = 3 mi

1:190,080



May 9, 2018

Proposed Barrier - Starr County

(b) (5), (b) (7)(E)

LEGEND

Proposed Barrier FY18

Proposed Barrier FY18

*If sheet measures less than 11x17" it is a reduced print. Reduce scale accordingly.

1 in = 2.37 mi

1:150,000